

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 181615Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3524

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AG, MO

SUBJ: ALGERIA/MOROCCAN RELATIONS: NASTINESS INCREASES

1. AS SAHARA PROBLEM RAISES TEMPERATURES, ALGERIANS AND MOROCCANS APPEAR TO BECOME EVEN NASTIER TO EACH OTHER THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN RECENT PAST.
2. MOROCCANS DEPORTED FROM ALGERIA: DEPORTATIONS AND HARASSMENT OF MOROCCANS IN ALGERIA CONTINUE. OFFICIAL MEDIA HERE HAVE SURFACED DEPORTATION QUESTION, ASSERTING THAT THOSE BEING EXPELLED HAVE BEEN IN ILLEGAL STATUS HERE. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN JOURNALIST, POLICE ARE SUMMONING WORKING CLASS MOROCCANS, TAKING THEIR DOCUMENTS AND, AFTER INVESTIGATION, SHIPPING MANY TO BORDER FOR DEPORTATION. WE HAVE NO FIGURES ON TOTAL NUMBER OF DEPORTATIONS BEYOND 300 MENTIONED IN ALGIERS 3599, BUT EXPLUSIONS APPARENTLY CONTINUING ON REGULAR BASIS. MOROCCAN COMMUNITY HERE ALARMED.
3. AT SAME TIME, ARRESTS AND OTHER HARASSMENTS HAVE ALSO PROCEEDED. AMCONSUL ORAN'S LATEST FIGURE FOR MOROCCANS IN JAIL IN THAT CITY IS 200.

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4. ALGERIAN LAWYERS CONDEMNED IN FES: ALGERIAN

PRESS REPORTED DEC. 16 THAT FES TRIBUNAL HAD SENTENCED TWO ALGERIA LAWYERS TO 18 AND 24 MONTH JAIL TERMS AND FINES FOR INSULTING MOROCCAN MONARCHY DURING COURSE OF ANIMATED DISCUSSION WHICH INTENDED TO INCRIMINATE THEM.

5. GOOD SOURCE TELLS AMCONSUL ORAN THAT TWO ALGERIANS, SENTENCED BY FES TRIBUNAL RECEIVED 6 MONTHS AND 6 YEARS IN PRISON. FORMER, AHMED SETTOUTI, WHO IS ONE OF ORAN'S LEADING LAWYERS AND BROTHER OF ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE, SAID TO HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED FOR DRINKING HARD LIQUOR ON SUNDAY. BAKHTI, A YOUNG JUDGE IN ORAN, WAS SENTENCED FOR INSULTING MOROCCAN MONARCHY. FES CAFE OWNER AND HIS ASSISTANT GIVEN SUSPENDED SENTENCES IN AFFAIR. AMCONSUL ORAN'S SOURCE SAID THAT SETTOUTI HAD DISAPPEARED THREE MONTHS AGO DURING TRIP TO MOROCCO AND HAD ONLY BEEN HEARD FROM LAST WEEK. AMCONSUL ORAN NOTES THAT BOTH WERE VERY PROMINENT FIGURES IN ORAN AND THEIR JAILING HAS GIVEN ALGERIAN/MOROCCAN CRISIS REAL IMMEDIACY TO ORAN ELITE.

6. IN BUREAUCRATIC DOMAIN, FRONTIER AT OUJDA REMAINS CLOSED, AT LEAST TO ALGERIANS AND MOROCCANS. SURPRISINGLY, ROYAL AIR MAROC PLANE WAS OBSERVED DISCHARGING PASSENGERS AT ALGIERS AIRPORT DEC. 16 WE HAVE NO OTHER INDICATION THAT ROYAL AIR MAROC FLIGHTS HAVE BEEN RESUMED ON REGULAR BASIS.

7. COMMENT: SITUATION OBVIOUSLY INCREASINGLY UNPLEASANT FOR MOROCCANS IN ALGERIA. DEPORTATION OF ENTIRE MOROCCAN COMMUNITY HERE (WHICH ACCORDING TO ALGERIAN SOURCE OF AMEMBASSY RABAT IS 350,000) WOULD MAKE QUITE A DENT BUT WOULD APPEAR UNLIKELY.
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